

A
Companion to the Altar:

Shewing the

Nature and Necessity

OF

Sacramental Preparation,

In order to our *Worthy*

Receiving the *Holy Communion.*

WHEREIN

Those Fears and Scruples about *Eat-
ing and drinking Unworthily, and incurring
our own Damnation thereby,* are prov'd
groundless and unwarrantable.

Unto which are added,

PRAYERS and MEDITATIONS
Preparative to a *Sacramental Preparation,*
according to what the Church of *England*
requires from her Communicants.

*I will wash my Hands in Innocency, O Lord, and
so will go to thine Altar, Psal. 26. Ver. 6.*

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L O N D O N:

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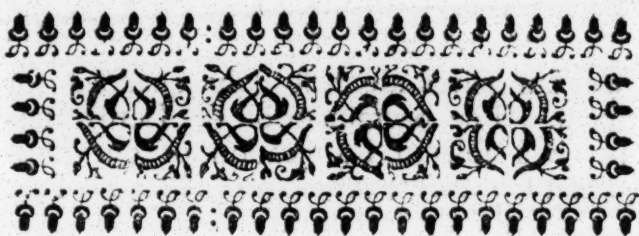
☛ This Book is Bound up with the *Common
Prayers* of several Sorts: And to be had
at the Place abovesaid.



THE PREFACE.

THE usual Reason which Men assign for their not coming so often to the Holy Sacrament as they would do, is, their Fear of Eating and Drinking unworthily, and consequently of incurring their own Damnation thereby: The Design then of this short Discourse is, to shew what that Sacramental Preparation is, which is absolutely necessary to qualify Men for a worthy Participation of the Lord's Supper, that so Men may come without the least Fear of Eating and Drinking Damnation to themselves: For which Purpose, I conceive no Rule, no Instruction more safe, easy and instructive, than that of our Church Catechism, which I have endeavoured to explain, and to accomodate for the Use and Benefit of the meanest Capacity.

The concluding Part of this Discourse contains Prayers and Meditations Preparative to a Sacramental Preparation; and tho' they be few in Number, yet I hope they fully answer all those several Parts of a Communicant's Duty, according to that Rule and Standard which our Church has fixed for our Guide and Companion to the Holy Altar. By the Addition of those Psalms and proper Lessons annex'd to each particular Prayer and Meditation, the Communicant may enlarge his Devotions to what Degree or Length he pleaseth; thro' which Method you have as much matter for actual Preparation in this little Book, as in any other Discourse of this Nature whatsoever.



A

COMPANION

TO THE

ALTAR.



ALL those Blessings which we now enjoy, and hope hereafter to receive from Almighty God, are purchased for us, and must be obtained thro' the Merits and Intercession of the Holy JESUS, who has instituted and ordained *Holy Mysteries*, as Pledges of his Love, and for a continual Remembrance of his Death and Passion, to our great and endless Comfort. 2 *Luke* 2. 19. 1 *Cor.* 11. 24. But then we must remember that these Benefits and Blessings (which the Son of God has purchased for us) are nowhere promised, but upon Condition that

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we our selves are first duly qualified for them. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a solemn Ratification of our Baptifmal Covenant, wherein God for his Part hath faithfully promised *Pardon and Remission of Sins to all true Penitents*, and we for our Parts are therein solemnly bound to be *faithful and obedient unto him*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. Before then we can promise to ourselves any Benefit or Advantage from the Participation of this *solemn Rite and Covenant* between God and us, we must endeavour (what in us lies) to possess our Souls with all those Divine Qualifications which this *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* requires, to render us worthy Partakers thereof.

AND what those are, is the Design of this Discourse ; wherein I shall endeavour to shew what that *Preparation of Heart and Mind* is, which must dispose us for a worthy Participation of the blessed Sacrament : And herein I hope to remove all those Fears and Scruples, which arise in our Minds, about *eating and drinking unworthily, and of incurring our own Damnation thereby*, as groundless and unwarrantable ; and to do this, I shall take Occasion to explain that Part of our CHURCH CATECHISM, designedly intended for our Instruction, with relation to this Duty of a *Sacramental Preparation*, viz.

Q. WHAT is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper ?

A.

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A. *To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former Sins; stedfastly purposing to lead a new Life, have a lively Faith in God's Mercy, thro' Christ, with a thankful Remembrance of his Death, and to be in Charity with all Men.* This is that Sacramental Preparation which our Church (in as few Words as is possible) hath provided for our Companion or Guide to the Holy Altar. The Duty then of a devout Communicant consisteth in these six following Particulars: 1. Self-Examination, *to Examine themselves.* 2. Repentance towards God, *whether they repent them truly of their former Sins.* 3. Holy Purposes or Resolutions of a new Life, *stedfastly purposing to lead a new Life.* 4. Faith in God's Mercy thro' Christ, *to have a lively Faith, &c.* 5. A thankful Remembrance of his Death. 6thly and Lastly, Unfeigned Love or Charity for all Mankind, *and to be in Charity with all Men.*

THE first Part then of a Communicant's Duty is *Self-Examination*: A Duty not only enjoined by Human Authority, but likewise commanded by *St. Paul.* But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup, 1 Cor. 11. 28. Intimating, That no Man should presume to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup without a previous Preparation, if he mean to escape that same Judgment or Condemnation which these *Corinthians* brought upon themselves for their irreve-

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rent, sinful, and disorderly Behaviour at this Sacrament. And this was the Occasion of St. Paul's Caution and Reproof: He that *eateth and drinketh unworthily,* (says the Apostle) *eateth*

* *Note,* This Word *Damnation* does not signify *Eternal*

Condemnation; but on the contrary, some temporal Punishment or Judgment (as you have it in the Margin of your Bible) such as Sickness or Death, with which this City of *Corinth* was afflicted, for their great Abuse and Profanation of this solemn Institution; so that the Sins here reprov'd, (*viz.* Gluttony, Drunkenness, and Faction, *ver.* 21. 22.) and the Damnation here threatned, hath no relation to us, unless it could be proved that any of us were ever guilty of the same Wickedness with these *Corinthians*; which I believe no Man ever was, or would be suffered to approach the Lord's Table after such a disorderly Manner as they did, if Men were so lewd and profane.

BUT that our Preparation may be so well performed by us, as to prevent the like Danger, let us (as the wise Man adviseth) *Remember the End, and we shall never do amiss,* Eccl. 7. 36. First then, That we may come to this heavenly Feast *holy, and adorned with the Wedding Garment,* Mat.

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22. 11. we must search our Hearts, and examine our Consciences, not only till we see our Sins, but until we hate them; and instead of those filthy Rags of our Righteousness, we must adorn our Minds with pure and pious Dispositions: *even that clean Linen, the Righteousness of the Saints*, Rev. 19. 8. With these Ornaments are holy Souls fitted for the Society of that Celestial Company, which are to be met with at this Solemnity. *Secondly*, Another End or Design of this strict Preparation, is, That we may be accepted of by God as worthy Communicants; *that he who knoweth the secrets of all our Hearts, neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all Things are naked and opened unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do*, Jer. 17. 10. Heb. 4. 13. may approve of the Sincerity of our Repentance; and the King, who comes in to view the *Guests*, Matt. 22. 11. may (tho' strictly speaking we are not so) count us worthy of his Favour and Countenance. And how to obtain so great a Blessing, these following Instructions will help and assist us.

FIRST, we are directed to *repent us truly of all our former Sins*. *Repentance.* This is that Preparation which Christ himself requires of us, *Mat. 3. 2, 3.* A Duty, you know, which our sinful Lives makes always necessary for our Consideration, if ever we expect eternal Happiness hereafter, *Luke 13. 2, 3.* But more especially

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especially the Dignity of this Sacrament requires that it should be enquired into with more than ordinary Care and Circumspection, because without sincere Repentance we cannot expect any Benefit or Advantage from the Death and Passion of Christ, which in this Sacrament we commemorate, and have the Merits of it conveyed to us by this sacred Memorial. Supposing then that this is sufficient to convince you of the Necessity and Importance of this Duty, that upon it depends our Welcome or Rejection, to or from this heavenly Feast, unto which you are called: I proceed now in the second Place to inform you, That if your Repentance or Return to God be real and sincere, it will produce these following *good Effects* in us.

FIRST, *A Sense, a Sorrow and Confession of all our former Sins.*
The Nature Secondly, *A steadfast Purpose or Resolution to lead a new Life.* These are the genuine *Fruits of a true Repentance*, and must always accompany our Return to God, if we hope to have it effectual to our Salvation. And,

FIRST, We must labour to gain a *Sense or Sight of all our former Sins and Wickedness*; this will readily present itself to us by comparing our Lives and
The ten Com- Actions by the Rule or
mandments. Standard of God's Word,

* See an Explication of the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, by the Author of the *Christian Monitor*.

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which we must make the Measure of our Examination †. St. Paul shews us, *Rom.* 3. 20. That by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin; and our own Experience will convince us, that there is no way more likely to discover our Iniquities, and to humble ourselves for them, than a serious Application of God's Word to our crooked Paths; and this Duty of *Self-Examination*, is never more properly applied to, than when we intend to receive the Holy Communion; for unless we see the Number, and apprehend the Heinousness of our Offences, and fear the Vengeance due unto us for them, we are altogether unfit for the Commemoration of his Death, *who died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification*. It's the Sense and Sight of Sin, that must shew us the Need and Necessity of a glorious Redeemer, and what Obligations we are under to bless and praise God for our Salvation by his Son JESUS CHRIST. Of such great Use and Advantage is this Duty of *Self-Examination*, at all times, that *Pythagoras*, in those golden Verses which go under his Name, particularly recommends the same to his Scholars. *Every Night before they slept, he enjoins them to examine themselves what Good they had*

† See the *Daily Self-Examinant: Or, An Earnest Persuasive to the Duty of Daily Self-Examination, &c.* by Dr. Warren.

done,

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done, and wherein they had transgressed. Run over those Things (saith he) and if you have done Evil, be troubled; if Good, rejoice. This Course, if daily followed, as is suggested by *Hierocles*, his excellent Commentator, perfects the Divine Image in those that use it. *Plutarch*, *Epietetus*, *Seneca*, and the Emperor *Marcus Antoninus*, agree in recommending the same Practice by their own Example, but especially Holy *David*; *I thought on my Ways, and turned my Feet unto thy Testimonies*, Psal. 119. 59. And this Method, no doubt, is an admirable Means to improve us in Virtue, and the most effectual Way to keep our Consciences awake, and to make us stand in Awe of ourselves, and afraid to Sin, when we know before hand that we must give so severe an Account to our selves of every Action. And when we are employing our Minds in this Duty of *Self-Examination*, before the Communion, or at any other time, we must discharge it as impartially as is possible for us, judging as severely, of our own Actions, as we would do of our greatest and worst Enemy; or otherwise we shall but flatter and deceive our selves in a Matter of the greatest Weight and Importance, viz. Of knowing the State and Condition of our own Souls; but if our Enquiries are just and true, we shall then plainly discover wherein, and how often we have gone astray

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astray and done amiss. We shall, by the faithful Discharge of this Duty, bring to Light *all our ungodly, unjust and uncharitable Actions; all our vain and filthy Speeches; all our wanton, proud and covetous Thoughts.* Such a strict and impartial Examination will discover to us that accursed Thing Sin, *Deut. 7. 26.* which has defiled our Nature, made God our Enemy, and will exclude us the Kingdom of Heaven, if not repented of, *1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.* But by such a severe Scrutiny as this, we shall soon perceive the Number of our Transgressions, what vile Wretches and grievous Offenders we are, how often we have broken our most serious Vows and Resolutions, especially after the receiving the Holy Sacrament, and in Times of Sickness and Distress: Such a Sight, and such a Prospect of Misery as this, should excite in us a hearty Trouble and Sorrow for Sin; especially if we cast an Eye upon the final Issue and Consequences of it, with respect to the World to come. *Upon the Ungodly (saith Holy David) God will rain Snakes, Fire and Brimstone, Storm and Tempest; this shall be their Portion to drink, Psal. 11. 7. Great Plagues remain for the Ungodly, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul of Man that doeth Evil, Rom. 2. 8, 9. The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the People that forget God. These and many other such-like Texts of Scripture,*
may

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may give us some Idea or Notion of the deplorable Condition of the Wicked in a future State, and of God's Hatred against Sin: And is not this then, without multiplying Arguments, sufficient to affect us with great Grief and Sorrow, when we consider that so long as we live in a vicious Course, so long are we exposed to all those Plagues and Torments which God hath in store for wicked Men, and will most certainly be their Lot and Portion, if not prevented by a timely Repentance?

THE second Part of a true Repentance is *Contrition*, or a sorrowful *Contrition*. Bewailing of our own Sinfulness in *Thought, Word* and *Deed*. When we call to Mind the *Sins* and *Follies* of our past Lives, and the Dangers we are like to fall into, surely we cannot be otherwise affected, than sensibly grieved with the Thoughts and Apprehensions of our present and approaching Misery. The Sorrows of *David*, and the Repentance of *St. Peter*, 2 *Sam.* 12. *Luke* 22. shew'd themselves in Floods of Tears, and were too big to be confin'd within: But our Hearts are generally so hard and unrelenting, that we sin against God, and lose our own Souls without so much as a Sigh or Tear. I know that the Tempers of People are different; some can shed Tears upon every slight Occasion, and others cannot weep tho' their Hearts are ready to break for Grief; and therefore we are not to judge
of

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of the Sincerity of our own or other Peoples Repentance by such Signs and Tokens; nor are Tears always necessary to Repentance, tho' they very well become us; and the least we can do, when we have done amiss, is to be sorry for it, and to condemn our Folly, and to be full of Indignation and Displeasure against ourselves. *I will declare my Iniquity* (saith Holy David) *and be sorry for my Sin*, Psal. 38. 18. Especially if we have been very wicked, and have multiplied our Transgressions, and have continu'd long in an evil Course, have neglected God, and have *forgotten him Days without Number*, then the Measure of our Sorrow must bear some Proportion to the Degrees of our Sins; if they have been as *Scarlet* and *Crimson*, Isa. 1. 18. that is, of a deeper Dye than ordinary, then our Sorrow must be as deep as our Guilt; if not so great, we ought to shew so much Trouble and Contrition of Spirit, as to produce in us a penitential Confession of all our *former Sins*.

WHICH is the Third Pro- Confession perty of a sincere Repentance. *of Sin.*

I will acknowledge my Sin unto thee (says the Prophet David) *and mine Unrighteousness have I not hid; I said, I will confess my Sins unto the Lord, and so thou forgavest the Iniquity of my Sin*, Psal. 32. 5. Which Confession of Sins must not be in general Terms, that we are Sinners with the rest of Mankind, but it must be

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a special Declaration to God of all our most heinous Sins, in *Thought, Word,* and *Deed*, with all their several Aggravations, laying open our Sores to our Heavenly Physician; and this must we do, to shew that we condemn all our former evil and vicious Courses, with a full Purpose and Resolution of Mind (by God's Assistance) that we never intend to do the like again. Unless this be done, our Sorrow for Sin, and the Confession of our Wickedness, can never profit us in the Sight of God, if it be not join'd with a firm Resolution of leading a *New Life*.

WHICH is the Fourth, and *A New* most Essential Part of a *sincere Life*. Repentance, and the only Condition of finding Mercy with God. *He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper, but whose confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have Mercy,* Prov. 28. 13. *Let the wicked Man forsake his Ways, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon,* Isa. 55. 7. *I tell you nay (saith Christ) but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,* Luke 13. 3. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, Acts 3. 19. Those preceding Parts of Repentance beforemention'd, are only preparative to this; that which must compleat and finish the Work of a new Convert, is to be-

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come a *New Creature*, to turn from our *evil Ways*, and to break off our *Sins by Righteousness*. This certainly must be the Desire and Intention of all Communicants, if they hope or expect any Benefit, or Advantage from this *solemn Rite or Covenant*; for he that comes with a Design or Intention of continuing in his former Sins, comes somewhat like unto *Judas*, that came, and received, and at the same time continu'd his Resolution of betraying his Master. That which makes a Man absolutely unfit to receive the Holy Sacrament is, the living in the constant and habitual Practice of any known Sin, without the least Desire or Intention of Repentance, or Amendment. Such a Man's Approach to the *Holy Table*, no doubt, is to *eat and drink his own Damnation*, since it's a plain mocking of God, and a great Contempt and Abuse of his Divine Authority. We must therefore (by the Help and Assistance of God's Grace) resolve to lead a *New Life, following the Commandments of God*, or otherwise our former Examinations will appear but slight and superficial, our Sight and Sense of Sin trivial and indifferent, our Sorrow and Contrition of Spirit forced and hypocritical, and our Confessions odious and formal. Therefore examine well the Sincerity of your Repentance and Resolutions, that you neither deceive God nor yourselves: Him you cannot, because he is a *Searcher of the Heart*, and

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a Discerner of the Thoughts, nor will he accept of any thing which is not hearty and unfeigned.

NOT that we are to suppose, that this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper doth require perfect Obedience in all our Addresses to the Holy Altar, or that none must come, but such as are in a sinless State of Perfection. No, this were impossible, because, *there is no Man which liveth and sinneth not; for, who can say, I have made my Heart clean, I am pure from my Sin? and that even the just Man falleth seven times a Day.* The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not a converting, but a confirming Ordinance, intended to preserve and increase that *Spiritual Life and Grace* which we received at our Baptism: So that when we come to the Holy Communion, we come thither for fresh Supplies of *Grace and Goodness, for the strengthening and refreshing our Souls in all Holiness and Virtue:* As our natural Bodies are fed and nourished with those Elements of Bread and Wine, the same Effect is wrought in the Soul in the Inward Man, by these *Holy Mysteries*, as in the outward Man, by Bread and Wine; Bread being the Staff of Life, and Wine the most Sovereign Cordial (when taken in due Proportion) to chear and rejoice the Heart.

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Heart. And thus our Souls, by this Sacrament are fortified and strengthened with *Grace, Wisdom, Courage, and all other Spiritual Gifts, to keep us thro' Faith unto Salvation.* Both the Comfort and Benefit of it are great; the Comfort of it, because it does not only represent to us the exceeding Love of our Saviour, in giving his *Body to be broken, and his Blood to be shed for us,* but it likewise seals to us all those Blessings and Benefits which are purchased, and procured for us by his Death and Passion, *viz. The Pardon of Sin, and Power against it.* The Benefit of frequent Communion is also of as great Advantage, because hereby we are confirmed in all Grace and Goodness, and our Resolutions to live in Obedience and Conformity to God's Laws are strengthened, and the Grace of God's Holy Spirit, to do his Will, is hereby convey'd to us: It is the Sovereign Remedy against all Temptations, by mortifying our Passions, and by spiritualizing our Affections: In a Word, it's the likeliest Method to make our Bodies the Temples of the Holy Ghost, and to prepare our Souls for the Enjoyment of God to all Eternity.

AND if at any Time thro' Ignorance, Surprize, *Relapses after* or the Violence of any *Receiving, not* other Temptation, we *dangerous.* should fall into those very Sins, which we have repented of, and
B
vowed

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vowed against, when we were at the last Sacrament, yet these Relapses should not make us afraid of coming again, since we have always the Benefit of Repentance allow'd us: If after a Relapse we repent and renew our Resolutions with a hearty Grief and Contrition of Spirit, we are made whole as before. *If the Wicked* (saith God) *will turn from all his Sins that he hath committed, all his Transgressions that he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him,* Ezek. 18. 21, 22. *Sin no more,* says our Saviour to the Woman taken in Adultery, *and I will not condemn thee,* John 8. 11. It is not the Commission of this or that great Sin that will utterly exclude us from God's Mercy and Forgiveness; for then, indeed, no Person could escape Damnation, because *there is not a just Man upon Earth that doeth Good and sinneth not,* Eccles. 7. 20. But it's our Living and Dying without Repentance and Amendment, that brings God's Wrath and Vengeance upon us. His Mercies are not limited, he will not only pardon us once or twice, but always upon our Repentance and Return to him. No Time, no Age, or Season, does he except against; *but whenever the wicked Man turneth away from his Wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his Soul alive,* Ezek. 18. 27. Neither is there any Sin, tho' never so vile and heinous in its own Nature,

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Nature, but shall be remitted and forgiven, unless it be that against the Holy Ghost. *All manner of Sins and Blasphemies shall be forgiven unto Men, but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven*, Mat. 12. 31, 32. And consequently, this Sin of *Eating and Drinking unworthily*, in the worst Sense, cannot be a damning Sin, because God in the Gospel (for Christ's sake) hath promised to forgive all our Sins, upon our Repentance, and therefore this of unworthy Receiving among the rest.

SOME People, I remember, have been very much concerned and discomposed at their Devotions, upon the Repetition of some few Expressions contained in the last Exhortation to the Communion, *viz.*

— ‘ *Of being guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour; of eating and drinking our own Damnation.* —

‘ *Not considering the Lord's Body.* —

‘ *Kindling God's Wrath against us.* —

‘ *Provoking him to plague us with divers*

‘ *Diseases, and sundry Kinds of Death.*

‘ These are hard Sayings, and some of

‘ them too hard to be understood: But

‘ however, they are all avoided, and e-

‘ scaped, by coming worthily, *i. e.* by Faith

‘ and Repentance: Therefore let not

‘ these terrible Expressions trouble you,

‘ or detain you from the Holy Communi-

‘ on: Repent and believe, and you are safe

‘ and secure from falling into any of those

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‘Dangers, which these Sentences may seem to threaten you with.’ So that the want of Preparation, as some Men have alledg’d, and in the Sense they generally take it, can never be a sufficient Plea or Pretence for their not coming to the Holy Communion; because, after our best and strictest Endeavours to prepare our selves, we profess (before God and the Congregation) ‘That we do not come to this Heavenly Table trusting in our own Righteousness, but in his manifold and great Mercies.’ By these we are invited to come; and to the Mercy of God (thro’ Christ) all of us must flee, and take Sanctuary in; who has promised, that *he will in no wise cast out those who come unto him*, John 6. 37. *A broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*, Psal. 51. 17. There is nothing dreadful in this Sacrament, but to the wilful, impenitent and persevering Sinner, whose Condition is dreadful, and every Page in Scripture is terrible against such, whether they come or not; but to the penitent and humble Soul nothing is dismal or affrighting in this Holy Feast; there is none condemned for unworthy Receiving, but such who deserve it for continuing in their Iniquities; and this Impenitence renders even their Prayers an *Abomination unto the Lord*. Tho’ they never partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, they are in equal Danger with those who Eat and

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and Drink unworthily ; nay, I might say in greater ; because the one useth the Means in Obedience to our Saviour's Command, and the other wilfully neglects that which would prevent his *Damnation*, if rightly considered, and timely applied to. The surest Way, I say, to prevent our *Damnation*, is to receive the Sacrament more frequently than Men usually do, that by a constant Participation of this Spiritual Food *of the Living Bread which comes down from Heaven*, their Souls may be nourish'd in all Goodness, and new Supplies of God's Grace and Holy Spirit may be continually derived to them for the purifying of their Hearts, and to enable them to run the Ways of God's Commandments with more Constancy and Delight than they did before. So that the true Consequence *of Eating and Drinking unworthily*, should rather excite our Care and Diligence in this Duty, than delude us with false Reasonings, to such a Neglect as will certainly increase our *Damnation* ; it being certain, that God will never cast any Man into eternal Flames for striving to do his Duty as well as he can. *If there be first a willing Mind* (saith the Apostle) *it is accepted, according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12. Neither ought we to think so unworthily of the Son of God, who came into the World to *save Sinners*,
that

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that he would institute this Ordinance to be a Snare to entangle our Souls with. It was not ordained for Angels, or for glorified Saints, but for humble and penitent Sinners, to bring them home to God: It being a Seal of their Pardon, and a refreshing Declaration of our Heavenly Father's Readiness to forgive the *chiefest of Sinners for Jesus's sake*, who graciously calls upon all who are *wearied and oppressed with the Guilt and Burden of their Sins*, to come to him, and he will refresh them, Mat. 11. 28. *Christ came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance*, Mat. 9. 13. And consequently, such as account themselves most unworthy, are those very Persons whom Christ doth here call and invite to this *Sacrament*, when deeply sensible of their Unworthiness. Were we not Sinners, were we not *conceived and born in Sin*, we should not need such Means and Instruments of Grace as *Sacraments* are; 'but being by Nature 'born in Sin, and the Children of Wrath, 'we are hereby made the Children of 'Grace, and Inheritors of the Kingdom 'of Heaven. *They that are whole* (saith Christ) *have no need of a Physician, but they that are sick*. This being the Case of all Mankind, with respect to their Spiritual Life, there is no other way to free our selves from this Death of Sin, but speedily to apply our selves to this
Heavenly

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Heavenly Physician, *who came into the World to seek and to save those that are lost and ready to perish*; and the very Sense of our own Unworthiness, is of all other Arguments the best Qualification to recommend us to God's Favour and Mercy, since we know that *he resisteth the Proud and presumptuous Sinner*, but never denies his Grace and Favour to the *Humble and Meek*. As often then as we come to the Holy Communion with such an honest and true Heart, as to exercise our *Repentance towards God, our Faith and Hope of his Mercy, thro' Christ, for the Forgiveness of our Sins, and our Love and Charity for all Mankind*; such a Temper and Resolution of Mind as this, will, doubtless, render us worthy Partakers of these *Holy Mysteries*, and prevent us *eating and drinking Damnation to our selves*. Nay, I further add, That any Person thus disposed or qualified, may come (if it should be required) at an Hour's Warning, as safely as he may come to Church, and say his Prayers, or to hear a Sermon. The Dueness of Preparation doth not so much depend upon our setting aside so many extraordinary Days for the forcing ourselves into a Religious Posture of Mind, as upon the plain natural Frame and Disposition of our Souls, as they constantly stand inclined to Virtue and Goodness thro' the general Course of our Lives.

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Men of great Business, either publick or private, are not hereby excus'd from frequent Communion.

Lives. From whence I infer, that a Multitude of Business, or a Man's being deeply engaged in the publick Affairs of this World, cannot be any just Plea or Pretence for his not coming to the Holy Communion;

because all Business is consistent with the Duties of Religion, provided we govern our Affairs by Christian Principles: Tho' such Men have not Leisure for so much actual Preparation, yet they may have that habitual Preparation, upon which the great Stress ought to be laid in this Matter: Nay, even the conscientious Discharge of a Man's Duty in his Business, may be one of the best Qualifications to recommend him to God; since every Man serves God when he follows his Calling with Diligence, and observes Justice and Honesty in all his Dealings; and consequently, the greater Danger and Temptation he's expos'd to thro' the Multiplicity of Business, the more need hath he of God's Grace and Assistance, which are abundantly communicated to us in this Holy Ordinance: So that Men of Business, if they have any serious Thoughts of another World, ought more especially to lay hold on such Opportunities which secure the Salvation of their Souls; for as they who have Leisure ought to *Receive* constantly

A Companion to the Altar. 27.

stantly, as the best Improvement of their Time; so they that are engag'd in many Worldly Affairs, ought to come the oftner to the Holy Communion, and learn how to sanctifie their Employments. But to proceed.

THE other Branch of a Communicant's Duty *A lively Faith* is, to examine whether *in God's Mercy* he hath a *lively Faith* in God's Mercy through Christ. *Examine your selves whether you be in the Faith,* 2 Cor. 13. 5. this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper being only appointed for such Believers as own their Baptism, and profess the *Faith* of Christ crucified, and understand the Fundamental Articles of the *Christian Religion*, contained in the Apostles Creed, and also the End and Design of this Holy Institution. The Benefits of our Saviour's Death and Passion in this Sacrament are indeed freely offered unto all, but only effectually to Believers: *As many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe in his Name,* John 1. 12. *And this is Life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* John 17. 3. All that Christ hath done and suffered for us Men and our Salvation, can never profit us, unless we have *Faith* to believe it: That which must render the Benefits and Blessings of the Gospel effectual to
C
our

28 *A Companion to the Altar.*

our Salvation, is, our Faith in Christ. *Verily I say unto you (saith our Saviour) he that heareth my Words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death unto Life,* John 5. 24. The ancient Churches accounted those only faithful that had received the *Lord's Supper*; and the *Germans* allow'd none to come unto their Sacrifices who had lost their Shields; nor does our own Church allow that any of us should come to this Christian Sacrifice without this Shield of Faith. *Draw near with Faith (says the Priest) and take this Holy Sacrament to your Comfort.* And this Faith for the Object hath God's Mercy, through Christ, as the Fountain and Foundation of all those Infinite Blessings and Comforts which we gain by his Manifestation in the Flesh; and if we inquire into the Cause and Reason of so much Mercy and Goodness to Mankind, no other can be given but *the Riches of his Mercy*, Eph. 2. 4. And if we further enquire how this Mercy became ours, the Answer is plain; It was thro' Christ, by whom all the Blessings of this Life, and those of a better, are purchased for us, and must be obtained thro' the Merits and Intercession of the *Holy Jesus*, by him we were redeemed, and according to the *Riches of his Grace, we have obtained*
Remission

A Companion to the Altar. 29

Remission of our Sins, and thro' him at last we shall be glorified.

AND to this our Faith we must join a thankful Remembrance of his Death, and of those Benefits which we receive thereby: Our gracious and merciful Lord (saith Holy David) hath so done his marvellous Works, that they ought to be had in remembrance, Psal. III. 4. But especially this Work of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, which to forget were an Ingratitude baser and viler than ever *Heathens* or *Publicans*, the very worst of Mankind among the *Jews*, were known to be guilty of towards their Benefactors, *Mat. 5. 46. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins,* 1 John 4. 10. This is a Mercy far above all other Mercies, nay, it is even this which sweetens all other Mercies to us: Had there been no Redemption, our Creation had only made us capable of endless Torments, and it had been better for us never to have been born, than to inevitable Ruin; which must have been our Lot and Portion, had not ' *the Son of God, by his own Oblation of himself, once offered upon the Cross, made a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice and Satisfaction to God for the Sins of the whole World.* The Consequences of
C 2 ' this

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this Redemption are so infinitely great and valuable, that it as much surpasses our Understanding, as it does our Merits. This we are to declare and to publish to all the World, what God hath done to save Mankind from that Damnation which they had deserved, and to restore us again to that Happiness and Glory which we could never expect or hope to enjoy, had not Christ died for us. *O come hither and hearken, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my Soul, Psal. 66. 16. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits, who forgiveth all thy Sins, and healeth all thine Infirmities; who saveth thy Life from Destruction, and crowneth thee with Mercy and Loving-kindness, Psal. 103. 2, 3, 4.* With what Joy and Thankfulness then should every good Christian commemorate this exceeding Love of God in the Salvation of Sinners, by *Jesus Christ!* This was the proper End and Design of this Institution, to perpetuate this wonderful Love of Christ in laying down his Life for us. *Do this in remembrance*

Our Obligations to a frequent Communion. *of me,* said our Saviour a little before his Crucifixion; which being a solemn Command of our Master and only Saviour thus dying for us, we cannot refuse Obedience hereunto, without being guilty of the most horrible Ingratitude and Contempt of his Divine Authority.

A Companion to the Altar. 31

Authority. He hath appointed it for a solemn Commemoration of his great Love to us in laying down his Life for us Men, and for our Salvation; and therefore he commands us to do it *in remembrance of him*. And St. Paul tells us, that *as often as we eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, we do shew forth the Lord's Death till he come*. As for those Men then amongst us who profess themselves Christians, and hope for Salvation by Jesus Christ, not to pay Obedience to this his Command, is a downright Affront to his Sacred Majesty; and he may justly upbraid us Christians, as he did once the Jews, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the Things which I say?* How unworthy are we of that Salvation which he hath wrought for us, if we deny him so small a Favour, such a reasonable Request, as to commemorate his Death and bitter Passion once a Month, or at least thrice a Year, who *'did humble himself even to the Death of the Cross for us miserable Sinners, who lay in Darknes, and in the Shadow of Death, that he might make us the Children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life.* In this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper we have the Pardon and Remission of all our Sins, the Grace and Assistance of God's holy Spirit, and

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the Hopes of eternal Life and Happiness freely offer'd unto us: And therefore, had we no Love, no Regard or Reverence to the dying Words of our crucified Saviour, yet surely the Consideration of our own present and future Advantage might prevail with us to be more frequent at the Lord's Table than we usually are.

And to be in Charity with all Men. HITHERTO a Communicant hath been directed to set his Heart right towards God, but this is not all, he must proceed further, and enquire how it stands towards

his Neighbour, since we are expressly forbidden, *Forgiving of Injuries expected from a Communicant.* *Mat. 5. 23, 24.* to offer up any Gift or Oblation unto God, if our Hearts are leaven'd with Malice,

Hatred or Revenge. *If thou bring thy Gift unto the Altar, and there remembrest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* Here you see that Christ prefers Mercy before Sacrifice. And it's generally agreed on by the Ancient Fathers, that these Words of our Saviour do directly point at this Sacrament, on purpose to oblige all Communicants to forgive all manner of Injuries, *before they presume to eat of that Bread, or to drink of that Cup.*

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Cup. And it's expressly said, *Mat. 6. 14, 15.* that our Prayers are not accepted, nor our Pardon sealed in Heaven, until such time as *we forgive Men their Trespases*; and to be sure we can never be welcome or worthy Guests at this Heavenly Feast, where *Jesus* the Saviour of Penitents and the Prince of Peace is spiritually present, unless our Repentance reconcile us to God, and our Charity to all Mankind.

AND this Charity of the Heart, in Forgiving of Injuries, must likewise shew it *Charity to the Poor.* itself by the Hand, in relieving the Wants and Necessities of the Poor. We read, That when this Sacrament was administer'd in the Apostles Days, that large Collections of Money were then gathered for the Maintenance of the Poor, Clergy and Layety, *Acts 2. 44, 45, 46.* and *1 Cor. 16. 1.* And *Theodoret* observes, that *Theodosius* the Emperor, when the time came to offer, arose, and presented his Oblations with his own Hands. It was not determined how much every Man should give, but all Men were exhorted and enjoin'd to offer something according to their Ability, which if any neglected, the Fathers censur'd them as unworthy Communicants; and to be sure nothing within our Power can so effectually recommend our Prayers and Devotions like this of *Charity*: It being well observ'd, *Mat. 6.* that our Saviour hath inclosed Alms be-

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tween *Prayer* and *Fasting*. And therefore they are called its Two Wings, without which it will never flee so high as the Throne of God. While *Cornelius* was fasting and praying, we read that an Angel from Heaven was dispatch'd to him, with this happy Message, *Thy Prayers and thine Alms are come up for a Memorial before God*, Acts 10. 4. *He that hath Pity upon the Poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again*, Prov. 19. 17. *Charge them that are rich in this World----that they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life*, 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19. *Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things live of the Sacrifice, and they who wait at the Altar are partakers with the Altar? even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel*, 1 Cor. 9. 13, 14. *If we have sown unto you Spiritual Things, is it a great Matter, if we shall reap your worldly Things? Ver. 11. But we may justly complain with St. Basil, that we know some* *Basil. Hom.* *who will fast and pray,* *in Mat. 19.* *sigh and groan, yea and do all Acts of Religion which cost them nothing, but will not give one Farthing to the Poor: What Benefit is there*

A Companion to the Altar. 35

there (saith he) of all the rest of their Devotions?

AND when the Communicant has thus far advanced to- *Prayer.*
wards the Altar, in his *Examination, Repentance, &c.* he must not forget another excellent Preparative belonging to this Duty of communicating worthily, which although it be not mention'd in our *Church-Catechism*, yet it is always implied, as a necessary Part of our *Sacramental Preparation, i. e. Prayer **, private and publick; a Duty upon which all our present and future Blessings depend, *Mat.* 7. 8. and 21. 22. And so near a Relation hath this Duty of Prayer with this Sacrament, that all those Blessings therein contained and promised, are only in Return to our Prayers; and no doubt but that Man who makes a conscientious Practice of this Duty in his Closet, and at Church, can never be unprepared for this Sacrament, nor want a Title to God's peculiar Favour and Blessing; *For the Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Prayers,* 1 Pet. 3. 12. The constant Exercise of *Prayer*, is the best Method to get the Mastery over our evil Inclinations and corrupt Affections, and to overcome our
vicious

* See *The Devout Soul's Daily Exercise*; in *Prayers, Contemplations, &c.* Price 6 d.

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vicious Habits: It preserves a lively Sense of God and Religion in our Minds, and fortifies us against those Temptations that assault us; it spiritualizeth our Nature, and raiseth our Souls above this World, and supports us under the Troubles and Calamities of this Life * by sanctifying such Afflictions; it leads us gradually to the Perfection of a Christian Life, and preserves that Union between God and our Souls, which feeds our spiritual Life with Grace and Goodness; without it we in vain pretend to discharge those Christian Duties incumbent on us, or to prosper in our Temporal Affairs, which must have God's Blessing to crown them with Success. And as Prayer in general has these great Blessings and Advantages attending it, so give me leave to suggest to you under this Head, That those publick Prayers and Devotions which we offer unto God in our Churches, are not only more acceptable to him, but also much more edifying and advantageous to ourselves; † they cannot but be more acceptable

* See *The Daily Companion, with Christian Supports under the Troubles of this World, &c.* Price bound 6 d.

† See *The Church-Man's Daily Companion, Discourse 1. Of the Necessity and Advantages of frequenting the Publick Prayers.* By Dr. Warren.

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acceptable to God, because thereby his Honour and Glory is much more considerably advanced and maintained in the World, than by our private Devotions: By these outward *Signs* and *Tokens* we publicly declare to all the World that inward *Regard* and *Esteem* which we have for his divine Perfections and Goodness; hereby we *let our Light so shine before Men, that they may see our good Works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven*, Mat. 5. 16. There is no Duty in Scripture more frequently commanded, none more earnestly press'd upon us, than this of publick Prayer. We have the Example of all good Men, in all Ages, for it; and of Christ himself, who was daily in the Temple and in the Synagogues, and, no Question, frequented those Places at the usual Hours of Prayer, because then he had the fairest Opportunity, from those Publick Assemblies, to instruct, and to exhort to *Faith* and *Repentance*. 2dly, We may expect greater Blessings and Success to our Requests and Desires, when we join in the Publick Prayers of our Church, than from Private, because our Saviour has in a special manner promised to such Assemblies his immediate Presence, that *where Two or Three are gathered together in his Name, there will he be in the midst of them*; which he hath no where said the like of Private, tho' both are very good, nay, both are absolutely necessary for the Beginning

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ginning and Ending of a Christian Life ; and it is a very bad Sign of some Evil Principle or other, for any Man to be much a Stranger to the *House of Prayer* ; which is one of the greatest Blessings and Privileges (if we know how to value the same) that we can have in this World, and has always been accounted such among all wise and good Men. It is certain that the *Turks*, whom we call Infidels, go to their publick Devotions Five times every Day ; and shall they not rise in Judgment against us Christians, who cannot afford to go once or twice a Day to God's House, when we have both Leisure and Opportunity ? If Men shall be judged *for every idle Word*, to be sure they shall not pass unpunish'd for all the Neglects and Omissions of their Duty of this Nature. But to proceed.

To this Duty of *servent Reading and Meditation* Prayer, the Communicant should spend some Portion of Time in Reading and Meditation, to raise his Soul into a Devout and Heavenly Temper : The proper Office of Reading is, to gain Spiritual Food and Sustenance, and of Meditation to digest it. Those Divine Subjects most proper for our serious Contemplation, on this solemn Occasion, I think, are our *Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, the Love of God in the Salvation of Sinners, through Jesus Christ, Repentance, Faith, Charity,*

A Companion to the Altar. 39

*Charity *, Death and Judgment; the happy Condition of a future State of Blessedness, and the miserable Condition of the Damned in Hell.* These, and the like, as they offer themselves unto you, should be meditated upon until some Sorrow of Mind, some Ardour of Devotion, some Act of Faith, some Flame of Love and Charity arise in your Souls.

THUS have I briefly represented to you both the Nature and Necessity of a *Sacramental Preparation*, which in a great Measure contains the whole Duty of a Christian's Life, viz. *Repentance towards God, Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and Charity towards our Neighbour*: And I also hope, whosoever among us will but endeavour to prepare themselves for the Holy Communion, according to the forementioned Directions, may (by the Help of God) upon all Occasions, come to the Lord's Table without the least Fear or Danger of *eating and drinking Damnation to themselves*.

AND now some People may censure this Discourse, as giving too great Liberty and Encouragement to approach the
Lord's

* See *The Devout Christian's Preparative to Death*, translated from Erasmus by R. Warren. D. D. Price bound 6 d.

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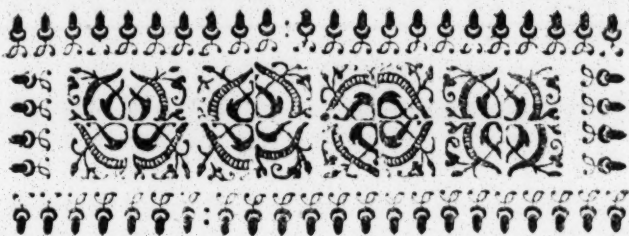
Lord's Table with less Preparation than otherwise Men would venture to do : But I know no Ground or Reason for any such Suggestion, if they impartially consider the Excellence
Church and Perfection of that Guide
Catechism. and Companion I have followed throughout the whole : And to represent this Duty of frequent Communion otherwise than what the Church requires, is an Injury both to God and to ourselves : and I dare affirm, that no Part of Divine Worship has suffered more on this Account, than that of the Holy Communion, Thousands of People not daring (in all their Life-time, tho' very good Livers) to partake of the Lord's Supper, for fear of eating and drinking their own Damnation.

For further Instruction, see *A Treatise of Sacramental Covenanting with Christ : Shewing the Ungodly their Contempt of Christ, in their Contempt of the Sacramental Covenant.* By the Author of the *Christian Monitor.*

And, *Spiritual Counsel : Or, The Father's Advice to his Children.* By J. Norris, M. A. late Rector of Bemerton.

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P R A Y E R S



PRAYERS and MEDITATIONS

Preparative to a

Sacramental Preparation,

According to

What the Church of *England* requires
from her Communicants.

*A PRAYER to God for his gracious
Assistance and Direction in our Sacramen-
tal Preparation.*



ONLY, Holy, Holy, Lord
God of Sabaoth, Hea-
ven and Earth are full
of thy Majesty, and of
thy Glory: I the un-
worthiest of all Crea-
tures, do here in all
Humility of Soul and
Body, prostrate my self before thee, ac-
knowledging my own Weakness and In-
sufficiency to do any thing that is good or
well-pleasing in thy Sight; and therefore
humbly implore the special Influence of
thy

42 *Prayers and Meditations.*

thy Grace and Holy Spirit, to further these my Endeavours for a worthy Participation of this Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, which he has commanded me to *do in Remembrance of him*, and of those Benefits which we receive thereby. Teach me, O Lord, the right Way, and lead me in the Paths of Holy Preparation, that I may be received as a worthy and welcome Guest at this thy heavenly Table; Possess my Mind with a true Sense of the Greatness of this *Mystery*, and the Excellency of thy Mercy, in preparing this Table for our Spiritual Food: Inspire my Soul with pure and pious Dispositions, and instead of those filthy Rags of my Righteousness, cloath me with the Righteousness of the Saints, that my Heart may be a clean, tho' homely Receptacle for my Saviour, and fitted for the Society of that Celestial Company, which are to be met with at this sacred Solemnity, thro' *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen. Our Father, &c.* See *Psal.* 23. 26. III.

A Prayer for the Gift and Grace of Repentance.

AL MIGHTY and Eternal Lord God, *who art of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, and hast more especially enjoined all those who compass thine Altar, to wash their Hands in Innocency,* vouchsafe me unfeigned Repentance for my past Sins, a hearty Sorrow and Contrition of Spirit to lament my Sinfulness, and most firm and
stedfast

Prayers and Meditations. 43

stedfast Purposes to lead a new Life. It is the Voice of thy wondrous Goodness and Mercy, That if *the Wicked will forsake his Ways, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, thou wilt have Mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon him.* O let thy Goodness (whereof I have had so great a Share, and plentiful Experience) lead me to Repentance not to be repented of, that I may be a fit Guest at thy Son's Table: *Have Mercy upon me, O Lord, and according to the Multitude of thy tender Mercies, blot out all my Transgressions, for thy Mercy's sake in Christ Jesus, the Son of thy Love, whom thou hast set forth to be the Propitiation for our Sins.* Grant this, O merciful Father, for the Sake of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer. Amen. See Psal. 6, 25, 32, 38.

A Prayer before Self-Examination.


O Lord, thou that art *the Searcher of all our Hearts*, and a *Discerner of the very Thoughts*, and in whose Sight all things are naked and open, be pleased to impart a Ray of thy Heavenly Light, to discover all the Sins and Infirmities of my past Life, and whatsoever else thou knowest wherein I have done amiss, that henceforward no secret Sin may lie undiscovered and corrupted in my Soul, that by examining my Life and Conversation by thy Law, the Rule and Measure of my Duty, I may understand the true State and Con-
D tion

44 *Prayers and Meditations.*

tion of my Soul, and from a just Sense and Sight of all my Transgressions, thro' the Assistance of thy Grace and Heavenly Benediction, I may be enabled to reform my Life, and to *turn my Feet unto thy Testimonies*, so faithfully to search and examine my own Conscience, that I may come holy and clean to that Heavenly Feast, and be received as a worthy Partaker of that Holy Table which thou hast called me to: Grant this for thy Mercies sake in *Jesus Christ. Amen.* See *Psal.* 139.

Brief Heads of Self-Examination upon each Commandment.

Commandment I.

‘  H O’ I have not Atheistical-
 ‘ ly denied the Being of a
 ‘ God, or wickedly renoun-
 ‘ ced Him by Apostacy, yet
 ‘ have I not loved, desired,
 ‘ and delighted in other things more than
 ‘ in God? Or, have I not feared Men,
 ‘ and dreaded the Displeasure of the
 ‘ World more than God? Or, have I
 ‘ not trusted in Men, and relied upon the
 ‘ World more than upon God? Have I
 ‘ not despaired of God’s Mercy? Or, by
 ‘ presuming too much upon it, encouraged
 ‘ my self in Sin? Have I not been un-
 ‘ thankful for Mercies received? Or, have
 ‘ I

Prayers and Meditations. 45

‘ I not ascribed the Glory and Honour
‘ of what I now enjoy to my self, more
‘ than to God? (Say) *God be merciful to
me a Sinner, and lay not this (or these)
Sins to my Charge.* Repeat the same at
the end of every Commandment.

II.

‘ Tho’ I have not worshipped God by
‘ images, yet have I not entertained gross
‘ and false Conceptions of him? Or, have
‘ I not wilfully omitted coming to Church
‘ or to the publick Prayers, when I had
‘ no just Occasion to hinder me? Or,
‘ have I not rudely, irreverently or wan-
‘ tonly behaved my self during the Time
‘ of Divine Service? Or, have I not wil-
‘ lingly refused to come to the Lord’s Sup-
‘ per, when I have been called to it? Or,
‘ have I not rashly and unadvisedly re-
‘ ceived the Sacrament, without a Prepa-
‘ ration? Or, have I not broken my Vows
‘ and Resolutions which I then made?

III.

‘ If I have not openly blasphemed the
‘ Name of God, yet have I not lightly or
‘ irreverently spoken of him? Or, have I
‘ not profanely jested upon, or abused his
‘ Holy Places or Persons, or any thing else
‘ dedicated to his Service? Or, have I
‘ not taken God’s Name in vain, by com-
‘ mon Swearing and Cursing? Or, have
‘ I not broken my own Vows and Resolu-
‘ tions, especially my Baptismal?

D :

IV.

46 *Prayers and Meditations.*

IV.

‘ Have I not neglected the Worship of
‘ God on his Sabbaths ? Have I not spent
‘ part thereof in vain Sports, idle Discour-
‘ ses, Visits, and many other unnecessary
‘ Businesses ? Or, have I not suffered others
‘ to profane the Sabbath, when it was
‘ in my Power to restrain them from so
‘ doing ?

V.

‘ Have I not been stubborn, irreverent,
‘ and undutiful towards my Parents, re-
‘ jecting their Counsels, despising their Go-
‘ vernment, and coveting their Estates
‘ before their death ? Or, have I not con-
‘ tributed toward their Necessities when they
‘ were in Want, and I had it to help them ?
‘ Or, have I not been disloyal to my Prince,
‘ stubborn and unfaithful to my Master,
‘ refractory and unthankful to my Mini-
‘ ster, peevish and unkind to my Friend and
‘ Companion ?

VI.

‘ If I have not actually taken away the
‘ Life of any Person, yet have I not made
‘ my Neighbour’s Life grievous by Op-
‘ pression, Rage and Violence against him ?
‘ Or, have I not by Fighting or Quar-
‘relling wounded his Person ? Or, have
‘ I not tempted him by any other
‘ Vice or Intemperance, to destroy his
‘ Health, and so shorten his Days ? Or,
‘ have I not, by false and contumelious
‘ Speeches, wounded his good Name and
‘ Reputation ?

Prayers and Meditations. 47

‘ Reputation? Or, have I not, by my own
‘ Luxury and Intemperance in Eating
‘ and Drinking, been accessary to my own
‘ Death?

VII.

‘ If I have escaped the grosser Acts of
‘ Adultery and Fornication, yet have I
‘ not conceived Lust in my Heart, and
‘ neglected the Means to preserve my own
‘ and others Chastity? Or, have I not
‘ by Gluttony and Drunkenness, or any
‘ other impure Thoughts defiled my Soul?
‘ Or, have I not accustomed my self to fil-
‘ thy Talking, Jestings, and immodest
‘ Garbs, and unchaste Behaviour in com-
‘ mon Conversation?

VIII.

‘ If I have not been guilty of common
‘ and publick Stealing, yet have I been true
‘ and just in all my Dealings? Or, have I
‘ not contracted Debts, when I was consci-
‘ ous to my self that I was not able to pay,
‘ or make Restitution? Or, have I not
‘ wasted my own, or others Estates by ri-
‘ otous living? Or, have I not by Violence
‘ and Oppression, exacted of my Inferi-
‘ ors, or by unlawful Usury taken Advan-
‘ tage of their Necessities?

IX.

‘ If I have not before the Magistrate
‘ sworn falsely against any Man, yet have
‘ I not accustomed my self to Lying and
‘ Slandering? Or, have I not accused my
‘ Neighbour

48 *Prayers and Meditations.*

‘ Neighbour unjustly ? Or, have I not concealed the Truth of another, when Justice and Charity obliged me to give Evidence of it ? Or, have I not unjustly sought to uphold, or to blast my own or others Credit ?

X.

‘ Have I not secretly *complained* against the Providence of God, as if others had too much, and I too little ? Or, have I not by unlawful Means endeavoured to deprive others of their Goods and Prosperity ? Or, have I laboured truly and faithfully to get my own Living, and to be content with that State of Life unto which it hath pleased God to call me ?

A Penitential Confession of Sins, with an humble Supplication for Mercy and Forgiveness.

ALMIGHTY and Everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the Sins of all them that are penitent, create and make in me a new and contrite Heart,

Here call to mind all your most grievous Sins. that I worthily lamenting my Sins, and acknowledging my Wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the

God of all Mercy, perfect Remission and Forgiveness, through
Jesus

Prayers and Meditations. 49

Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. See Psal.
51. 6, 32, 38.

An Act of Contrition.

FATHER, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be call'd thy Son! Wo is me, O Lord, who was conceived and born in Sin! The Thoughts of my Heart are inclined unto Evil from my Youth; wo is me, that have sinned against thee my Creator and kind Benefactor! Lord, I have done Evil continually in thy Sight, and my Life hath been little else than one continual Course of Impiety, Unthankfulness, and of unworthy Returns for all thy Goodness and loving Kindness to me! Wo is me, that I should thus requite thee Lord: O that my Head were Waters, and mine Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep Day and Night for my Sin! O gracious Lord, look on me as thou didst on the Apostle St. Peter, and let thy compassionate Look so pierce my stony Heart, that I may weep bitterly for my Sins, and produce in me that Godly Sorrow which worketh unto Salvation not to be repented of, for Jesus's sake, Amen. See Psal. 25.

A Resolution to lead a new Life.

AND now, O Lord, I do not only with great Shame and Confusion of Face confess and bewail the Sinfulness and Vanity

50 *Prayers and Meditations.*

ty of my whole Life, but I do stedfastly resolve and purpose (through the Assistance of thy Grace and Holy Spirit directing me) to
 ‘ renounce the Devil and all his Works,
 ‘ the Poms and Vanities of this wicked
 ‘ World, and all the Lusts of the Flesh.’
 Be pleased, O Lord, to strengthen and confirm these good Resolutions in me. And I heartily thank thee, O heavenly Father, for calling me to the State of Salvation through *Jesus Christ* my Saviour, *who died for my Sins, and rose again for my Justification*; and I humbly beseech thee, for his Sake, to give me Grace to continue in the same unto my Life’s End. *Amen.* See *Psal.* 1, 23, 24, 25, 119, 126.

A Prayer for Faith in God’s Mercy through Christ.

AL MIGHTY God, our Heavenly Father, who for the more Confirmation of our Faith and Confidence in thy Mercy, hast in thy Holy Gospel declared, *that whosoever believeth in thy Son Jesus Christ, shall not perish, but have everlasting Life*; and that *this is Life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*: Increase this Knowledge, and confirm this Faith in me evermore! O let me not rest in a dead Faith, but that I may have such a *lively Faith*, as will shew it self by Love and good Works; such a victorious Faith,
 which

Prayers and Meditations. 51

which may enable me to overcome the World, and conform me to the Image of thy Son *Jesus Christ*, in whom I believe! O grant me such a due Sense of thy infinite Mercy, shewed to Mankind in so much Misery, as may never depart out of my Mind! I stedfastly believe, O blessed *Jesus*, that thou didst suffer upon the Cross to save me, and all the World, from the Guilt and Punishment of our Sins, O give me that Grace, that I may *die to Sin, and rise again unto Righteousness*! Accept of my imperfect Sorrow, Repentance, Faith, and imperfect Resolutions; and let the precious Merits of my Crucified Saviour supply all my Wants and Imperfections. Thou hast said, *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you.* O blessed *Jesus*, I come unto thee in all Humility, and deeply sensible of my great Unworthiness; O do thou bear this Burden of Sin for me, and refresh me with the comfortable Hopes of thy Mercy and Forgiveness, and the Truth of thy Salvation! Grant this, O merciful Father, thro' the same thy Son *Jesus Christ*. Amen. See *Psal.* 19. 57. *Eph.* 2. 6. 11.

A thankful Remembrance of the Death of Christ.

‘ **A**LMIGHTY God, our Heavenly
 ‘ Father, who of thy tender Mer-
 ‘ cy didst give thine only Son *Jesus Christ*,
 E ‘ to

52 *Prayers and Meditations.*

‘ to suffer Death upon the Cross for our
 ‘ Redemption, and hast instituted and
 ‘ ordained *Holy Mysteries* as Pledges of
 ‘ his Love, and for a continual Remem-
 ‘ brance of his Death and Passion, to our
 ‘ great and endless Comfort.’ Behold, I
 do most affectionately, and with all the
 Powers of my Soul and Body, return my
 most hearty Praise and Thanksgiving for
 thy great Mercy and tender Compassion
 to me and all Mankind, in sending thine
 only Son into the World to redeem us from
 Sin and Misery, and by his meritorious
 Death and Passion, to purchase for us E-
 ternal Life. Grant, O Lord, that I may
 always most gratefully remember this ex-
 ceeding Love of my only Saviour *Jesus*
Christ, thus dying for me; and work in me
 all such Holy and Heavenly Affections, as
 may dispose my Heart to be a worthy Guest
 at that Holy Table, prepared for the con-
 tinual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of
 the Death of Christ, and of those Benefits
 which we receive thereby. *Praise the*
Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his
Benefits; who forgiveth all thy Sin, and
healeth all thine Infirmities; who saveth
thy Life from Destruction, and crowneth
thee with Mercy and Loving kindness.
 See *Psal.* 103. 2, 3, 4.

Dr. Meriton's Family Companion : Or, Forms
 of Prayer for every Day in the Week. Price 1 s.

Prayers and Meditations. 53

A Prayer for the Grace of Charity.

‘ **O** LORD, who hast taught us that all
‘ our Doings without *Charity* are
‘ nothing worth ; send thy Holy Ghost,
‘ and pour into my Heart that most excel-
‘ lent Gift of *Charity*, the very Bond of
‘ Peace, and of all Virtues, without which
‘ whosoever liveth, is counted dead before
‘ thee ; more especially, when I am going
to commemorate the unspeakable Love
of my Blessed Saviour in dying for me,
let not my Heart be destitute of Love
towards my Brethren ; extend thy Mer-
cy and Forgiveness to all mine Enemies,
Persecutors and Slanderers, and turn their
Hearts ; which I as sincerely beg for
them, as I hope for Mercy and Forgiveness
at thy Hands. Possess me with Kind-
ness and Good-will for all Mankind, that
my *Faith may work by Love*, and dispose
my Heart, according to my Ability, to
administer towards the Wants and Ne-
cessities of those who are any ways afflicted
or distressed in Mind, Body, or Estate,
and do unto all Men as I would they
should do unto me ; and give me that
Charity which covereth a Multitude of
Sins, that by doing Good for Evil, all
Men may know that I am thy Disciple.
Grant this for *Jesus’s* sake. *Amen.* See
Psal. 15. 133, 41, 112. *Mat.* 25. 34, 41.
Mat. 18. 21. 1 *Cor.* 13.

54 *Prayers and Meditations.*

A Prayer the Morning you intend to Communicate.

O Most Gracious and Eternal Lord God, thou hast call'd all such who are *weary and heavy laden* to come unto thee by Faith and Repentance, *and thou wilt refresh them.* In affiance of this thy gracious Invitation, I will come to thy Heavenly Table, not trusting in my own Righteousness, but in thy manifold and great Mercies; and altho' I am not worthy so much as to gather up the Crumbs that fall from thy Table, yet since it's thy Property always to have Mercy, I will not despair of a kind Reception: Forgive my Want of a due Preparation, and accept of my sincere Desire to perform an acceptable Service unto thee; Cloath me with the *Wedding Garment*, even the Graces of the Gospel, and then I am sure I shall be a welcome Guest at thy Table, when I shall come thither in the Likeness of thy Son *Jesus Christ, in whom thou art well pleased.* Possess my Soul with a *lively Faith, profound Humility, filial Obedience, inflamed Affections, and universal Charity*, that so I may become a worthy Partaker of those Holy Mysteries, to my great and endless Comfort: Grant this, O Heavenly Father, if it be thy blessed Will, thro' *Jesus Christ. Amen.* Our Father, &c. See *Psal.* 23. 25, 26.

Short



*Short PRAYERS and MEDITATIONS before
the Minister at Church begins the Commu-
nion-Service.*

At going up to the Altar.



IN the Multitude of thy
tender Mercies, O Lord
God, do I now approach
thine Altar. O pardon
my Sins, and look not
upon my Unworthiness
(for I am a sinful Crea-
ture, O Lord) but upon
these Motives which drew me hither, even
my own Miseries and thy tender Mer-
cies; therefore help me to supply in Hu-
mility what I want in Worthiness, and
let my bended Knees and contrite Heart
shew that I durst not have adventured
hither, had not thy Mercy held out the
Golden Scepter, and said, *Come unto me,
all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and
I will refresh you.*

At giving your Alms.

O LORD, who didst not despise the Wi-
dow's Mite, accept of this little which
I freely offer towards the Relief of any of
thy poor Members. *Mark 12. 42*

54 *Prayers and Meditations.*

A Prayer the Morning you intend to Communicate.

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I freely offer towards the Relief of any of
thy poor Members. *Mark 12. 42.*

E 3

When

56 *Prayers and Meditations.*

When the Priest is setting in Order the Elements to be consecrated.

L O O K down, O Lord God, from thy holy Habitation, and from the glorious Throne of thy Kingdom, and sanctify us.

When you receive the Bread.

L O R D, I am not worthy of the Crumbs which fall from thy Table, and yet thou givest unto me the Bread of Life. Evermore give me this Bread, that I may eat hereof, and not die eternally. John 6. 34. 50.

After the Receiving of the Bread.

N O T unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the Praise, for thy loving Mercy, and for thy Truth sake.

Before the Receiving of the Cup.

W H A T Reward shall I give unto the Lord for all the Benefits he hath done unto me? I will receive the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.

After Drinking.

B L E S S E D be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his unspeakable Gift, in whom we have Redemption thro' his Blood, even the Forgiveness of our Sins.

When you retire from the Altar.

B L E S S the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name; bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits; who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, and healeth all thy Diseases; who redeemeth thy Life from Destruction, and crowneth thee with loving Kindness
and

Prayers and Meditations. 57

and tender Mercies. O let that Heavenly Food, which thou hast so lately fed me with, transfuse new Life and new Vigour into my Soul, and into the Souls of all those who have been Partakers with me of this Holy Communion, *that our Faith, Hope, and Charity* may daily increase, and that we may all grow in *Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Amen and Amen. See *Psal.* 8. 23. 66. 103.

Prayers and Meditations, which may be joined to the former, where the Communions are large.

Aspirations for a Devout Communicant.

ENLIGHTEN, O Lord, the Eyes of my Understanding with the Light of Faith and Wisdom, that I may ever look on thee my Redeemer, as the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*, which leadeth unto Eternal Life---- What am I, Lord, and what is my Father's House, that thou should'st thus follow me with thy Blessings? I was Created by thee and for thee, and may'st thou ever be the Comfort of my Soul: Good *Jesus*, my Hope and only Refuge, I here render thee hearty Thanks for all thy Sufferings, and I beg that I may find Shelter in thy Wounds against all Enemies, Ghostly and Bodily: Imprint the Memory

58 *Prayers and Meditations.*

of them fast in my Heart, that I may love thee, and in all my Sufferings, never want thy Divine Assistance, or forget what thou hast suffered for me—Take from me all Self-love, and give me perfect Love for thee, *the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*, that I may now be more faithful in my Duty; and let nothing for the future put me out of my way—O that I could ever remember thee, think of thee, and delight in thee alone, and love thee only, who hast loved us, and washed us with thy most precious Blood from the Guilt of our Sins!—O that my Senses may ever be shut against all Vanity and Sin, that my Mind being free from all fruitless Sollicitude and Fear, I may fix my Heart there where true Joys are only to be found!—From henceforth I will only seek thee, my only Good; my Affections and Desires, shall be fixed on thee, *in whose Presence there is fulness of Joys, and at whose Right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore*—My Will I now resign into thy Hands, desiring that thy Will may be mine, both now and for ever. Be thou my Instructor and Director in all things, that I may never do or speak, desire or think any thing but what is according to thy good Will—

2. **I** Am thy Servant, O Lord, O give me Understanding according to thy Word, that I may learn thy Commandments, and lay aside all Interest, beside that of Heaven. O sweet *Jesus*, Fountain of all Goodness, guide

Prayers and Meditations. 59

guide my Feet in thy Paths, and teach me to do thy Will: Disengage my Heart from all unprofitable Sollicitude and vain Affectation; and tho' I live here upon Earth, yet raise my Affections on things above. How sweet, O Lord, is thy Spirit, how pleasant to my Lips, are the Words of thy Mouth! O that I could ever be mindful of them, to fulfil thy Laws! make me die daily to the World and all its Concupiscences, and let the Greatness of thy Love make all that is Earthly appear as nothing to me: Protect me against mine Enemies, and in all Dangers appear in my Defence. Make haste to help me, O God, and say unto my Soul, *I am thy Salvation.* Remember thou art my Father, and have Compassion on my poor distressed Soul; cloath it with all Virtues, and feed it with thy Grace, for it belongs to the Father to take care of his Children. In thee I live, sweet *Jesus*, for thy sake I desire to die; both living and dying I will ever profess that thou art Good, and that thy Mercy endures for ever.

3. **O** That I could now give thee, O Lord, all that Praise, Glory, and Honour, with which the Angels and Blessed Spirits glorify thee in Heaven! But because I am unable to do this, accept at least this my Desire and good Will. Deliver me, O God, from every thing that is contrary to thy Will, and be pleased so to dispose of my Soul, as may be for thy Glory and Honour: I surrender myself into thy Hands, and intirely

60 *Prayers and Meditations.*

tirely resolve to submit to that State of Life thou shalt please to appoint me, and if it be more for thy Honour that I suffer, I chearfully accept it; *not my Will, but thine be done.* Let nothing be now my Comfort but thou, Lord *Jesu*, and nothing afflict me but my Sins, and whatever else is displeasing to thy Divine Majesty. O blessed *Jesus*, Life Eternal, by whom I live, and without whom I die, grant that I may now be united to thee, and in the Embraces of thy Holy Love and Divine Will, I may rest for ever. When shall I see thee, O sweet Saviour! when shall I appear before thy Face, when shall I see thee in the Land of the Living! Till then, I sigh and bewail my Banishment, desiring to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.

If these *Ejaculations* are not sufficient until the *Post Communion* begins, you may enlarge them, by reading more or less of these following Places in Scripture, *viz.*

For Grace to love God's Law, Psalm 19.

119.

For a Holy Life, Ps. 85.

For Salvation and Eternal Joys, Ps. 16. 24.

For Assurance of God's Care and Protection, Ps. 37.

For the Comfort of God's Holy Spirit, Ps.

34.

For the Grace of Humility, Ps. 131.

For Devotion in Religion, Ps. 27.

Thanksgiving for God's Mercies, Ps. 103.

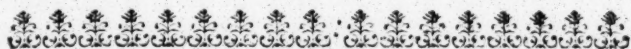
136, 138.

For

Prayers and Meditations. 61

For Pardon of Sins, Pf. 85. 106, 116.

For Redemption by Christ, Pf. 98. 118.



*An Act of Thankfulness and Resolution,
before the Post-Communion begins.*

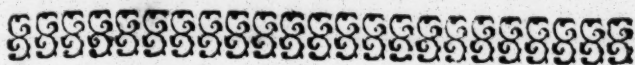
PRAISE the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his Holy Name ; for now I find the Mercy, the Peace, the Comfort, and the Grace which flows from this Fountain of Spiritual Communion with *Christ* : Let all the World know what he hath done for my Soul ; he hath rescued me, and many of these my poor Brethren, from the nethermost Hell : Wherefore, I will love thee, O Holy *Jesu*, more than I can express, and live and die in that most Holy Religion which thou hast revealed to me. O let me never pollute that Body, or defile that Soul, which *the Saviour of the World* delights to dwell in ! O let no Oaths or Lying, Back-Bittings and Slanderings, profane those Lips, no Obscenity or Intemperance pollute that Mouth, through which these Holy Symbols have so lately passed : For which fresh Instance of thy Mercy and Goodness, I will praise thy Holy Name, beseeching thee to keep me in this Temper and Resolution of Mind, until *Death* is swallowed up in *Victory*, for thy Son *Jesus Christ's* sake. *Amen.*

62 *Prayers and Meditations.*

A Prayer against evil and perplexing Thoughts.

G O not far from me, O Lord my God, make haste to help me; for corrupt Imaginations are perpetually rising in my Breast, and innumerable Fears and Sorrows close me on every side. Be pleased, O Gracious Lord, in this Perplexity, to refresh my Soul with some speedy Comfort. Scatter and disperse all these dark and sinful Thoughts which haunt my Soul, by shedding abroad the light of thy Grace into my Heart; for in the Extremity of this my Grief, this is my only Hope and Comfort, that I can take Sanctuary in thy Goodness, repose my Confidence, and cast all my Care and Burthen on thee, who never failest them that call upon thee; give me Patience under these Adversities, and a happy Issue out of all these Afflictions, both of Body and Mind. *Turn thee unto me, and have Mercy upon me, for I am desolate and in Misery; the Sorrows of my Heart are enlarged, O bring thou me out of all my Troubles; look upon my Adversity and Misery, and forgive me all my Sin; O keep my Soul and deliver me; Let me not be confounded, for I have put my Trust in thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. See Psal. 6, 102. 34. 42. 43.*

Upon



*Upon Christmas-Day, and Seven Days
after, you may add these to your other
Devotions.*



Desire, O Lord, to bless and
praise thine infinite Goodness,
which took Compassion upon
Mankind in his greatest Mi-
sery, and hast provided so ad-
mirable a Remedy, by send-
ing thine only begotten Son to recover our
corrupt and degenerate Nature, and by the
Purity of his Doctrine, and the Example of
his Life, and the Sacrifice of his Death, to
purchase eternal Happiness for us. Grant, O
Lord, that through the Assistance of thy
Grace and Heavenly Benediction, I may
daily comply with those great Things which
thou hast done and designed for my Salva-
tion. Possess my Soul with Purity and
Piety, and all other Christian Graces and
Virtues, that *living soberly, righteously
and godly in this present World*, I may
hereafter dwell with thee, O *Father of
Mercies and God of all Comforts*, in those
Mansions of Bliss and Glory which thou
hast *prepared for them that love thee*.
Amen. See *Psal.* 19. 89, 45.

Easter Day, and Seven Days after.

Blessed *Jesus*, who hast triumphed over
the Power of Darkness, and conquered
Hell and the Grave, and who, by thy glo-
rious Resurrection, hast made known the
Power of thy Divinity, and proved thy self
the

64 *Prayers and Meditations.*

the true *Messias*, keep me stedfast in this *Faith*; and grant, that all the *Actions* of my Life may testify the Reality and Sincerity of my Belief, by a suitable Conversation, that I may rise from the Death of Sin unto the Life of Righteousness, that as I am buried with thee by *Baptism*, I may hence-forward mortify all my corrupt Lusts and Affections, and daily proceed in all Virtue and Godliness of Living, that departing this Life in thy Faith and Fear, I may have my perfect Consummation and Bliss both in Body and Soul, in thy eternal and everlasting Kingdom, through the same thy Son our Saviour *Jesus Christ*. *Amen.* See *Psal.* 2. 57. 111.

Whitsunday, and Seven Days after.

O Lord my God, who by thy Son our Saviour *Jesus Christ* hast promised the Assistance of thy *Holy Spirit* to all that ask it of thee, I beseech thee always to direct my Ways and Actions, the Thoughts and Intentions of my Heart, by the Light of thy Holy Spirit. Let him be unto me a *Spirit of Sanctification*, to purify my corrupt Nature, a *Spirit of Counsel* in all my Difficulties; of *Direction* in all my Doubts, Fears and Scruples; of *Courage* in all my Dangers; of *Constancy and Consolation* to me under all my Persecutions and Sufferings, especially in time of Sickness, and at the Hour of Death, that being governed and guided by his Divine Influence and Direction, I may pass through all the Changes
and

Prayers and Meditations. 65

and Chances of this mortal Life, till he bring me to everlasting Life, there to reign with thee, O blessed *Jesu*, World without End. *Amen.* See *Psal.* 34. 42, 43, 51.

Trinity Sunday.

GLORY be to thee, O God the Father, for creating me after thine own Image, capable of loving thee, and enjoying thee eternally ; for recovering me from a State of Sin and Misery, when I had lost and undone myself.---Glory be to thee, O God the Son, for undertaking the wonderful Work of Man's Redemption, for rescuing me from the Slavery of Sin, and the Dominion of Satan ; for the accomplishing this miraculous Work of our Salvation, thou didst descend from Heaven, and didst put on the Form of a Servant, live a miserable Life, and die a painful and accursed Death.---Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, for those miraculous Gifts and Graces thou didst bestow upon the Apostles, and for those ordinary Gifts, whereby sincere Christians in all Ages are enabled to work out their Salvation ; for thy preventing and restraining Grace for the subduing our Understandings and Affections to the Obedience of *Faith* and *Godliness* ; for inspiring us with good Thoughts, and kindling good Desires in our Souls ; for assisting us in all the Methods of procuring eternal Happiness--Blessing and Honour, Thanksgiving and Praise, more than I can express and conceive, be unto thee, O Father, Son
and

66 *Prayers and Meditations.*

and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen*
See *Psal.* 2. 47. 72. 110.

After the Blessing, *viz. The Peace of God.*

GRANT, O Lord, that we and all thy faithful Servants, who have this Day been made Partakers of the Holy Sacrament, may obtain Remission of our Sins, and be confirmed in Piety towards God, and in Charity towards our Neighbour; and may be delivered from the Power and Temptations of Satan; and being filled with thy Spirit, may become worthy Members of Christ's Holy Church, and at last, inherit eternal Life, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*



A Thanksgiving after the Sacrament, to be said at Home.

THOU, O my God, hast comforted my Soul, thou hast strengthened and refreshed me with thy Blessings, and rejoiced my Heart with the Tokens of thy Love. How transporting are thy Comforts, and how ravishing the Effects of thy Goodness towards them that fear thee! Thou hast treated a vile Sinner at thy own Table, and fed me with the Bread that came down from Heaven. In what am I better than those to whom thou dost not grant this Favour? It is not for my Merits, but

Prayers and Meditations. 67

but because thou wilt be glorified in doing good to the most unworthy, thou hast this Day made me a happy Example of this thy free Grace and Bounty. Grant me this Favour also, O my God, that through the whole Course of my Life I may give thee Praise and Glory ; that the due Sense of thy Mercies may make me unfeignedly thankful ; and that my Thankfulness may appear in a Care to walk before thee in Holiness, Sobriety and Righteousness all the Days of my Life.

*A Prayer in private, after the Receiving
of the Holy Communion.*

O How plentiful is thy Goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast prepared for them that put their Trust in thy Mercy, even before the Sons of Men ! I praise and magnify thy great and glorious Name, O Lord, for all those manifold Mercies and Comforts which thou hast bestowed upon me, ever since I was born. O Lord God, thou hast been my Trust from my Youth, by thee have I been holden up from the Womb ; my Praise shall continually be of thee ; but above all, blessed and for ever blessed be thy Holy Name, for the Manifestation of thy Son Jesus Christ, the Fountain and Foundation of all our Happiness, and for feeding me this Day (who am unworthy of the least of thy Mercies) with the Spiritual Food of his most precious Body and Blood,

F

to

68 *Prayers and Meditations.*

to my great and endless Comfort. Enable me, O Lord, through thy gracious Assistance, to perform the Conditions of that Sacramental Covenant which I have this Day so solemnly renewed and confirmed in thy Presence, and at thy Table, that thro' the Strength and Power of that Heavenly Food, I have there been Partaker of, I may daily *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of Christ Jesus, and abound in every good Word and Work.* And subdue in me all those inordinate Lusts and corrupt Affections which war against my Soul; purify my Mind from all evil Thoughts, bad Intentions, and evil Designs, and suffer not Pride, Vain Glory, Self-Love, Malice, Hatred, or Revenge, or any other Evil whatsoever, to reign in my mortal Body; but do thou keep it for ever in the Purpose of my Heart, faithfully to fulfil these my Baptismal Vows and Resolutions, which I have now again renewed at thy Holy Table, that by persevering in all Virtue and Holiness of Life, I may at length be an Inheritor of that infinite Happiness and Glory which thou hast promised, by *Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer in private, for the Grace of Perseverance.

HE A R, most merciful Saviour, I most humbly beseech thee, and let thy Grace be ever assistant to all the Endeavours

Prayers and Meditations. 69

vours and Designs of thy weak and unworthy Servant. I am not able of my self to do or think any thing that is good, or well-pleasing in thy Sight. O let thy Holy Spirit continually guard me against those numerous Temptations which so strongly encounter me. Fix my inconstant Mind, that I may not be led away with the Errors of the Wicked, and fall from my own Stedfastness, but that I may persevere in good Works unto the End. Moderate my Affections and Desires, and confine them only to such Objects as are well-pleasing in thy Sight. Let thy Will be the sole Guide and Measure of mine, that all my Hopes and Wishes may center in thee alone, and nothing may ever appear desirable to me, in Comparison of a pure Heart, and peaceable Conscience: *Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy Truth. O knit my Heart unto thee, that I may fear thy Name.* Make me to love thee (as I ought) above all Things, and let the Interest of thy Honour and Glory be always dearer to me than Gold or Silver, or any other Temporal Advantage; for thou, O Lord, art my Portion, thou art my only rest, in thee alone is Fulness of Joy, and true Satisfaction, and without thee is Misery and Torment. O grant me this blessed Retreat, this happy Security, and then I shall find rest unto my Soul, both here and hereafter. *Amen.* See *Psal.* 86. 119.

68 *Prayers and Meditations.*

to my great and endless Comfort. Enable me, O Lord, through thy gracious Assistance, to perform the Conditions of that Sacramental Covenant which I have this Day so solemnly renewed and confirmed in thy Presence, and at thy Table, that thro' the Strength and Power of that Heavenly Food, I have there been Partaker of, I may daily *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of Christ Jesus, and abound in every good Word and Work.* And subdue in me all those inordinate Lusts and corrupt Affections which war against my Soul; purify my Mind from all evil Thoughts, bad Intentions, and evil Designs, and suffer not Pride, Vain Glory, Self-Love, Malice, Hatred, or Revenge, or any other Evil whatsoever, to reign in my mortal Body; but do thou keep it for ever in the Purpose of my Heart, faithfully to fulfil these my Baptismal Vows and Resolutions, which I have now again renewed at thy Holy Table, that by persevering in all Virtue and Holiness of Life, I may at length be an Inheritor of that infinite Happiness and Glory which thou hast promised, by *Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer in private, for the Grace of Perseverance.

HE A R, most merciful Saviour, I most humbly beseech thee, and let thy Grace be ever assistant to all the Endeavours

Prayers and Meditations. 69

vours and Designs of thy weak and unworthy Servant. I am not able of my self to do or think any thing that is good, or well-pleasing in thy Sight. O let thy Holy Spirit continually guard me against those numerous Temptations which so strongly encounter me. Fix my inconstant Mind, that I may not be led away with the Errors of the Wicked, and fall from my own Steadfastness, but that I may persevere in good Works unto the End. Moderate my Affections and Desires, and confine them only to such Objects as are well-pleasing in thy Sight. Let thy Will be the sole Guide and Measure of mine, that all my Hopes and Wishes may center in thee alone, and nothing may ever appear desirable to me, in Comparison of a pure Heart, and peaceable Conscience: *Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy Truth. O knit my Heart unto thee, that I may fear thy Name.* Make me to love thee (as I ought) above all Things, and let the Interest of thy Honour and Glory be always dearer to me than Gold or Silver, or any other Temporal Advantage; for thou, O Lord, art my Portion, thou art my only rest, in thee alone is Fulness of Joy, and true Satisfaction, and without thee is Misery and Torment. O grant me this blessed Retreat, this happy Security, and then I shall find rest unto my Soul, both here and hereafter. *Amen.* See *Psal.* 86. 119.



Morning Prayer.

Ponder my Words, O Lord, consider my Meditations. My Voice shalt thou hear betimes, O Lord, early in the Morning will I direct my Prayer unto thee, and will look up, Psal. 5. 1, 3. Almighty God, who dwelling in the highest Heavens, yet vouchsafest to regard the lowest Creatures here upon Earth, I humbly adore thy sacred Majesty, and with all the Powers of my Soul and Body, do exalt and praise thy holy Name for all the Mercies and Comforts of this Life, and for the Hopes and Assurance of a better; for protecting me from the Evils and Dangers of the Night past, and for bringing me safely to the Light of a new Day; continue this thy Mercy and Goodness to me, and as thou hast awaken'd my Body from Sleep, so raise my Soul from the Death of Sin unto a Life of Righteousness. Deliver me, O God, from the Evils of this Day, and guide my Feet in the Paths of Peace and Holiness, and strengthen my Resolutions to embrace all Opportunities of doing Good, and carefully to avoid all Occasions of Evil, especially

* Here name such Sins you are most afraid of. * those Sins which by Nature and Inclination I am most likely to fall into; and

Morning Prayer. 71

and when through Frailty, or the Violence of any other Temptation, I fall from my Duty, do thou in Mercy restore me again with a double Portion of thy Grace and Holy Spirit, to maintain a more vigorous Defence against Satan and his Devices. Shower down thy Graces and Blessings upon all my Relations [*on my Father and Mother, on my Brethren and Sisters*] on all my Friends, and give thy Holy Angels Charge over them, to protect them from all Sin and Danger: Make me diligent in the Duties of my Calling, and that in all the Changes and Chances of this Life, I may absolutely submit to thy Divine Providence. Let thy Blessings be upon my Actions, and let thy Wisdom direct my Intentions, that so the whole Course of my Life, and the principal Designs of my Heart, may be ordered by thy Governance, to do always that is righteous in thy Sight, thro' *Jesus Christ* our Lord. Amen. See *Psal.* 4. 16. 17. 23. 86.

When you go out of your Chamber.

THE Blessing of God descend upon me,
and all belonging to me, and dwell in
my Heart, for evermore; and bless my
going out and my coming in, now and for
ever. Amen.

The

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The Evening Prayer.

LET my Prayer, O Lord, be set forth as Incense, and the lifting up of my Hands be as an Evening-Sacrifice. Psal.

141. 2. O Lord our Heavenly Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, whose Glory the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain, look down from the Throne of thy Majesty, and behold thy unworthy Servant prostrate at the Feet of thy Mercy, humbly confessing unto thee the Vanity and Sinfulness of my whole Life; Here name particular Sins and especially, the Omissions and Failings of the Commissions of my Duty this Day.

Day, wherewith I have so lately offended thine infinite Majesty and Goodness, and so grievously wounded my own Soul: of these and all other my Transgressions, *I most earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my Misdoings; the Remembrance of them is grievous unto me, the Burthen of them is intolerable: Have Mercy upon me, most merciful Father, for thy Son Jesus Christ's Sake, forgive me all that is past, and accept of these my Prayers and Supplications, thro' the Merits and Mediation of the same, our Mediator and Redeemer.* And altho' I am unworthy thro' my manifold Sins and Iniquities to offer unto thee any Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, yet I beseech thee to accept of this my bounden Duty, my unfeigned Thanks for all

all thy Goodness and loving-kindness to me and all Mankind, purely *Here name particular Blessings* proceeding from thy Bounty, and wholly intended for my *and Mercies.*

Good, and particularly for preserving me this Day in the midst of so many Dangers incident to my Condition, and from so many Calamities as are due to my Sins. Thou art my Creator, O my God, and Protector; thou art the ultimate End of my Being, and supreme Perfection of my Nature; under the Shadow of thy Wings is perpetual Repose, and from the Light of thy Countenance flows eternal Joy and Felicity, to whom be Glory and Honour, World without End. *Amen.*

And *Thou, O Lord, by whom Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice,* bless our most gracious Sovereign Lord King *George*, our gracious Queen *Caroline*, their Royal Highnesses *Frederick* Prince of *Wales*, the Duke, the Princesses, and all the Royal Family: All my Relations, Friends, and kind Benefactors; let thy Providence succour *Here name particular Persons.* them and theirs from all

Evil and Danger, and do thou reward them seven-fold into their Bosom for all the Good they have done or said of me. Be pleased likewise, O Lord (in whose Hands are the Issues of Life and Death) to succour, help, and comfort all that are in Danger, Necessity and Tribulation, all that labour under any Bodily Pain or Sicknes,
Tempta-

Especially those for whom our Prayers are desired,

Temptation, or are disturbed in Mind, relieve such according to their several Necessities, giving

them Patience under their Sufferings, and a happy Issue out of all their Afflictions. Subdue in me the evil Spirit of Wrath and Revenge, and dispose my Heart patiently to bear Reproaches and Wrongs, and to be ready not only to forgive, but also to do good for Evil, that all Men may know that I am *Christ's* Disciple. And finally, O Lord, since thou hast ordained the Day to labour in, and the Night to take our Rest, as I praise thee for the Mercies of the Day, so I humbly beg the continuance of thy gracious Protection over me this Night. Let thy Holy Angels pitch their Tents about my Bed, that being safely delivered from all Perils and Dangers of this Night, and comfortably refreshed with moderate Sleep, I may be enabled to discharge the Duties of my Calling, and faithfully to persevere in Holiness and Pureness of Living all the Days of my Life, to thy Honour and Glory, thro' our only Mediator and Advocate, *Jesus Christ* our Lord. Amen. Our Father, &c. **OC 57**

When you lie down in your Bed.

I Will lay me down in Peace, and take my Rest, for it's thou, Lord, only that makest me to dwell in Safety; and into thy Hands I recommend my Spirit, my Soul and my Body, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of Truth.

F I N I S.

[illegible]

